

TYCO 17674 (AT 20958-2034)
PATENT

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Applicant: Powell et al.

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Art Unit: 2833

Serial No.: 09/963,720

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Examiner: Leon, Edwin A.

Filed: September 26, 2001

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For: ULTRASONIC WELDED
CONNECTOR STICK

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, fax number 703-872-9306, on May 20, 2005.


Robert J. Kapalka

RESPONSE

This communication responds to the Office Action dated February 24, 2005. There are no claim amendments.

Claims 15, 18-24, 26, 30-34, 36-39, 41 and 42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Czaja (US 4,717,360) in view of Applicant's admitted prior art. Reconsideration is requested.

Preliminarily, applicants note that the Office Action refers to "Czaja (U.S. Patent No. 4,252,397)", whereas the Czaja reference of record is U.S. Patent No. 4,717,360, and U.S. Patent No. 4,252,397 has inventors Eigenbrode et al. The Examiner's discussion of Czaja appears to be based on U.S. Patent No. 4,717,360, and therefore applicants will assume that the reference to U.S. Patent No. 4,252,397 is in error.

The Examiner states that Czaja discloses the claimed invention except for the use of ultrasonic weld to connect the first and second connectors. The Examiner then points to applicants' disclosure which describes connectors joined by ultrasonic welds. The Examiner

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relies on applicants' statement that "weld 350 is T-welded as is well known in the art" to arrive at the conclusion that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the connector of Czaja by using ultrasonic weld as taught by Applicant's admitted prior art.


Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's reasoning. Applicant's admitted prior art is simply that ultrasonic weld having a T-shaped configuration is well known. To jump from this simple fact to the conclusion that it would have been obvious to modify the Czaja connector by using ultrasonic weld is a pure hindsight conjecture that is unsupported by any suggestion or motivation to combine the references.

Czaja discloses a modular connector assembly that is molded as a unitary structure. The molded unitary connector assembly has break-away walls that permit portions of the assembly to be separated from the main structure, thereby forming individual connectors. Czaja does not describe or suggest any joining together of individual connectors. Therefore, it would not have been obvious to modify Czaja by using ultrasonic weld, because there would be no need to do so. Czaja is not interested in joining connectors together. Instead, Czaja originally forms the connectors molded together in a joined state. To substitute ultrasonic welds for a unitary molded assembly would add nothing other than time and expense to the manufacturing process. Therefore, there would be no reason to modify the connector assembly of Czaja by using ultrasonic weld, and the references provide no suggestion or motivation to do so.

For these reasons, applicants submit that the invention defined in the pending claims is not known or made obvious by the cited prior art.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections, and allowance of the claims, are respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,


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